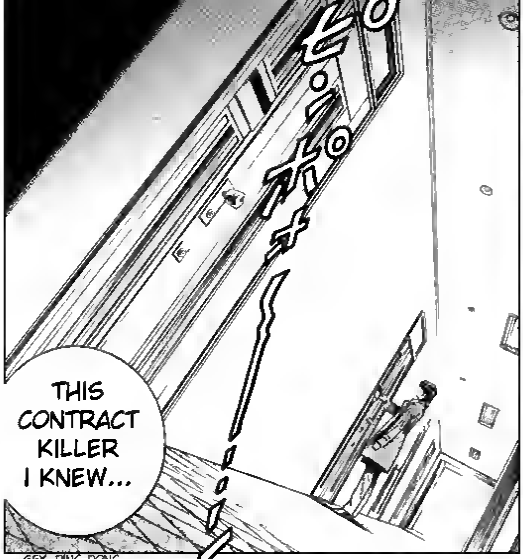
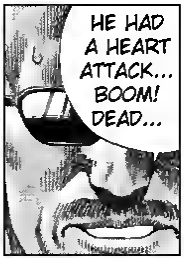
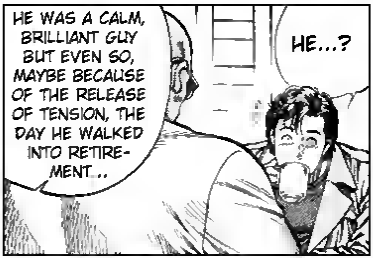
SAEKO IS BEDRID-DEN!?
Chapter 89 A Late Happiness
THIS CASE DIDN'T LET HER TAKE A BREATHER. NOW THAT THE CASE IS CLOSED, THE PRESSURE IS GOING DOWN.
FOR TEN YEARS...
FX: TAP
NAME PLATE: NOGAMI SAEKO
野上冴子
...
DID YOU GO SEE HER?
NAH, IT'S JUST A SMALL FEVER. SHE'LL RECOVER IN NOT TIME.
STILL... FOR THIS IRON SUPER-INTENDENT TO COLLAPSE... HARD TO BELIEVE.
...
AT LEAST IT PROVES SHE STILL HAS A FEMININE SIDE!


THIS CONTRACT KILLER I KNEW...
SFX DING DONG

...


HE HAD A HEART ATTACK... BOOM! DEAD...

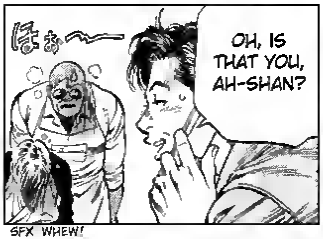

HE WAS A CALM, BRILLIANT GUY BUT EVEN SO, MAYBE BECAUSE OF THE RELEASE OF TENSION, THE DAY HE WALKED INTO RETIRE-MENT...
HE...?

...
IT CAN'T BE...!

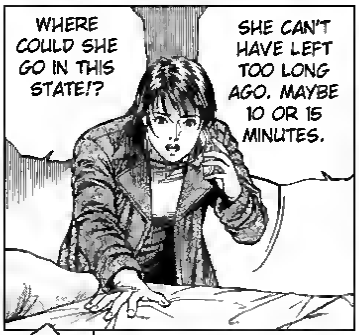
SFX CELL PHONE RING

HEY! WOAH! DON'T TALK CRAP LIKE THAT!

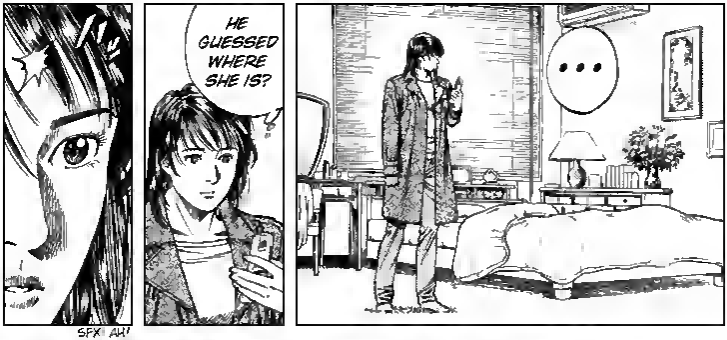
SFX GULP



SFX WHEW!



DON'T FORGET TO LOCK THE DOOR ON THE WAY OUT.
TO BREAK INTO A SUPERINTENDENT'S HOUSE
Alright I get it I think I might know where she went so let me take care of it Oh and Ah-Shan?
WELL, I WAS AFRAID THERE WAS AN EMERGENCY SO I BROKE IN...
HEH HEH



SFX: AH!

HEADSTONE: MAKIMURA FAMILY GRAVE

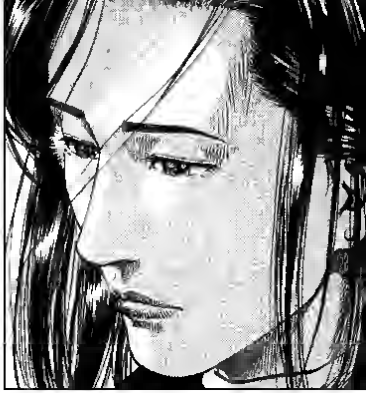
THAT'S WHAT I CAME TO TELL YOU TODAY...
AT LAST, EVERYTHING IS OVER...
AT LAST...
HIDE-YUKI...
IT BOTHERS ME SO MUCH I CAN'T SLEEP ANYMORE...
YOUR FEELINGS FOR ME...
SFX: PFF
FOR THE OTHER THING, TOO... I WOULD LIKE A CLEAR ANSWER.
BUT WOMEN ARE REALLY INSISTING. NOW THAT THIS CASE IS OVER..

I'M SURE YOU'RE LOOKING AT ME FROM IN THERE, LAUGHING AT ME BECAUSE I'M STILL OBSESSED WITH IT AT MY AGE, HIDEYUKI...
ALL OF IT BECAUSE YOU WERE NOT CLEAR...
OUCH!
SFX THUD
IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT, IDIOT!
FOR GOD'S SAKE, YOU'VE BEEN HITTING THAT STONE FOR 10 YEARS, NOW! IT'S GONNA BREAK! AND YOU'D BETTER PAY FOR IT!
...
RYO...?
...

IN THIS GRAVE, THERE'S ALSO DADDY AND MOMMY MAKIMURA PLUS KAORI, SO YOU MIGHT WANT TO AVOID MAKING A FUSS!
YOU'RE *THAT* OBSESSED WITH IT?
I REMEMBER...
SO THAT'S IT...
NOW THAT THE CASE IS CLOSED, THE MEMORIES THAT I BURIED ARE COMING TO THE SURFACE AND I CAN'T IGNORE THEM ANYMORE...
...

槙村家之墓

WHEN I ARRESTED TOYAMA FOR THE FIRST TIME AND CLOSED THE CASE, MAKIMURA INVITED ME TO DINNER...



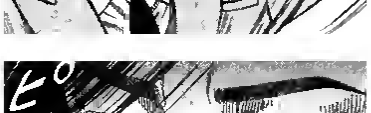
WHEN I SAW HIM LIKE THAT, I STARTED TO THINK IT WAS MORE THAN JUST A SIMPLE PARTY.
...
...
AND... I STARTED TO HOPE FOR SOMETHING MORE...

IT'S OKAY? ARE YOU SURE IT'S ALRIGHT TO RESERVE A TABLE IN SUCH AN EXPENSIVE RESTAURANT?
AH, NO! IT'S OKAY!

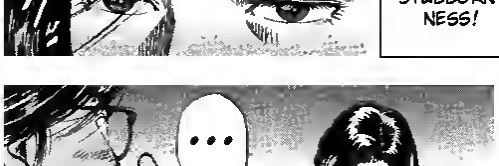
HE TOLD ME IT WAS TO CELEBRATE THE END OF THE INVESTIGATION.
...

YOU... WANTED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT SOME-THING?
HIDE-YUKI...?
SFX: THUMP
ERH... YES...
IN FACT...
...
...
I'M VERY HAPPY THAT YOU CLOSED THIS CASE!
I... YOU...
AH-
SA-SAEKO...
OH.
YEAH
THANKS.

IF YOU HADN'T SO ADAMANTLY REFUSED OUR HELP, THE CASE COULD HAVE BEEN RESOLVED A LONG TIME AGO


ヒクッ

WELL, YOU HELPED ME A LOT, EVEN THOUGHT IT WASN'T YOUR CASE.
WHO... WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT A CHILD WAS GUILTY? HA HA! I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY.
N-NO, BUT I GOT STUCK BY YOUR STUBBORN-NESS!


...

"OUR HELP..."

I WILL NEVER APPROVE OF VIGILANTES WHO THINK THEY UPHOLD THE LAW!
AS FAR AS I'M CON-CERNED

IT'S TRUE THAT YOU RESOLVED THIS CASE...
N-NO, SAEKO... SAY, LET'S TALK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE..
HOWEVER!

YOU KNOW IT WELL ENOUGH TO BE SICK OF IT!
SO WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT? OF THE LIMITS OF POLICE OPTIONS, OF ITS POWERLESSNESS!?
SFX: SLAM!
NO! NOT AT ALL! THAT'S NOT WHY-
WE ARE POLICE OFFICERS! DESPITE THIS, YOU TEAM UP WITH THAT PUERILE PERVERT CITY HUNTER!? NONSENSE! YOU INVITED ME HERE TO CONVINCE ME OF YOUR LEGITIMACY?
ALL OF THIS IS JUST TO SATISFY YOUR OWN PRIDE! AS A POLICE OFFICER, YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED!
SO GO ON! TELL ALL ABOUT US! I DON'T CARE!
I WON'T BE ABLE TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY FOREVER! STOP THIS INSTANT!
WAIT, SAEKO!
ENOUGH! I'M SICK OF THESE ENDLESS ARGUMENTS!
YOU CAN'T EVEN IMAGINE HOW I SUFFERED WHEN I HEARD ABOUT YOUR ACTIVITIES. IT WOULD BE BETTER IF YOU LOOKED THE OTHER WAY
SFX: SLAP!

SAEKO, YOU-
AND THINK ABOUT KAORI. TO MIX UP YOUR SISTER IN ALL THIS, IT'S PATHETIC!
SHE WORRIES TO DEATH AND YOU SACRIFICE HER! YOU ARE A TOTAL FAILURE AS A BROTHER!
SFX SWAT!
YOU DON'T HAVE TO...
WH- WHAT IS THAT...?
TELL ME ABOUT KAORI...

GUESS WHAT, I DO THINK ABOUT HER.
IT'S... IT'S FOR KAORI. TO THANK HER FOR ALL SHE DOES FOR ME EVERY DAY.
YOU'RE RIDICULOUS!
IT IS REALLY FOR KAORI?
THAT JEWEL CASE...

HERE. KAORI-MAMA KEPT IT PRECIOUSLY.
THIS RING... UNCLE MAKIMURA WANTED TO GIVE IT TO YOU. HE WANTED TO MARRY YOU.
KAORI-MAMA TOLD ME ABOUT IT IN A DREAM...

SFX: CLICK
...
...
HIDE-YUKI...
WANTED...
TO SAEKO

AH...
AAH...
...
SAEKO...?
...
Bdum
Bdum
Bdum

THANK YOU...
KAORI...
Bdum

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#[EVIL_GENIUS] @ IRC IRCHIGHWAY NET
HTTP //WWW EVIL-GENIUS US/FORUMS
HTTP //WWW EVIL-GENIUS US

TRANSLATOR: ALBATOR
EDITOR: VICISSITUDE
QC: NOMIMINO
RAWS: STALYN

#[Evil_Genius] @ irc.irchighway.net
http://evil-genius.us
http://forums.mindwerks.net

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Chapter 90 The Closest Feeling

7 YEARS... IT'S BEEN TOO LONG!
FINALLY...! WE WERE DESTINED TO MEET!
SHA-NIN...
...
AND NEVER TO BE SEPAR-ATED AGAIN!
I... SCORE!
...SHA-NIN...
...!! DEAD ASLEEP!

NEXT TIME, INVITE ME TO SOMETHING MORE STIMULATING, SHINHON!
1
シネマ
2
愛と情熱の
AAAAHH! NAPS ARE GREAT!!
...
HEY, AH-SHAN! SINCE YOU'RE GOING ON A DATE, YOU SHOULD WEAR SOMETHING SEXIER!
...AH, OKAY...
三田精神病
順天
...
THOUGHT IT WOULD STIR YOUR EMOTIONS

WE'RE JUST GOING TO SEE A MOVIE! SINCE WE'RE IMPORTANT ASSOCIATES, I SHOULD ACCOMPANY HIM OCCASIONALLY!
N-NO NO!
DATE...?
IN LOVE...
NO... THE STIRRINGS OF BEING IN LOVE.
NOW THAT I THINK ABOUT IT.. EVERY TIME SHIN-HON TAKES ME TO THE MOVIES, IT'S ALWAYS A LOVE STORY.
IS HE USING THE MOVIES TO SHOW ME WHAT LOVE IS?
...
WHEN IT COMES TO MY FEELINGS, THERE ARE STILL SOME THINGS I CANNOT GRASP.
HONESTLY... EVER SINCE MISS SAEKO'S AND UNCLE MAKIMURA'S INCIDENT, EVEN IF I CAN UNDERSTAND IT LOGICALLY...
I'M STILL NOT FAMILIAR WITH THOSE KINDS OF FEELINGS...

BUT IN SHANIN'S HEART, THE SPRINGTIME OF LOVE IS STILL FAR AWAY.
SUMMER IS DRAWING NEAR...
POOR SHIN-HON!
...
ANYWAY, I'M GOING!
UNFORTUNATELY THOSE FILMS ARE TOO BORING!
WHEE!
AHA!
♪
...
HA HA HA!
DON'T WALK SO FAST. . EH, COULD YOU... COULD I HOLD YOUR HAND?
ER...?
HEY! HEY, SHANIN!

WHAT'S WRONG, SHIN-HON? DO YOU FEEL SICK? IS THAT WHY YOU NEED ME TO HOLD YOUR HAND?
N-NO...!!
?
IT'S BECAUSE I... ER.. BECAUSE... SOMETHING... I...!
THERE YOU GO! THANKS FOR WAITING. YOUR DRAWING IS FINISHED.
SFX HEARTBEATS
OH, WOW! THANKS A LOT!!
OH, IT'S NOTHING.
IF IT MAKES YOU HAPPY, THEN IT MAKES ME HAPPY.

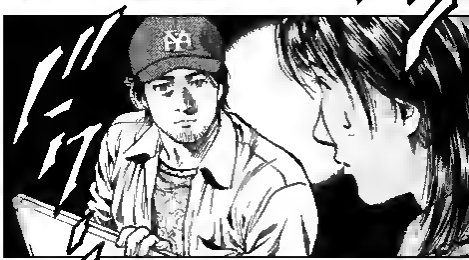
SHA-
NIN?
OH,
WELCOME.
...AH...

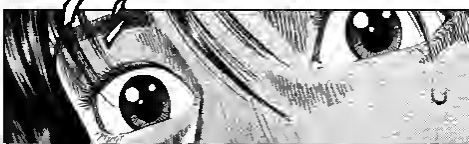
YOU... YOU'RE...!

SHANIN...?

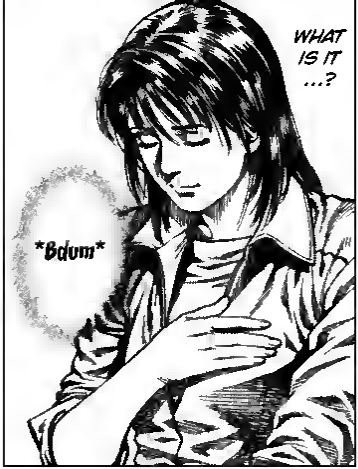
YOU... MUST BE...

WHO ARE YOU?





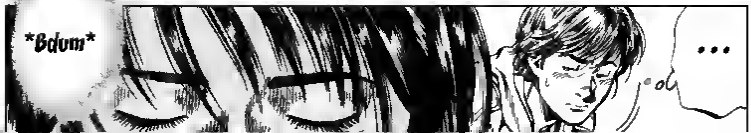
THAT... I'M SORRY ABOUT EARLIER...
PLEASE DON'T MOVE...
IT FEELS LIKE WE'VE MET SOME-WHERE BEFORE.
HA HA HA!
HEE HEE!
YOU'RE A REAL TROUBLE-MAKER!
AH...
EVEN IF YOU DID MISTAKE ME FOR SOMEONE... THIS KIND OF THING HAPPENS ALL THE TIME.


WHAT IS IT ...?
Bdum

SOMEONE FAMILIAR... NOT REALLY...
...

WHAT IS IT, HIS VOICE, HIS FACE...? WHY DO I REMEMBER HIM...!?
SOMEONE WHO'S A TOTAL STRANGER TO ME...

Bdum
IT SEEMS LIKE THE SAME FEELING I'VE HAD FOR SOMEONE IN THE PAST...
THIS FEELING OF CLOSENESS ...


Bdum
...

I CAN'T DRAW IT...
EH...?
HOW CAN THIS HAPPEN!?
NO... I CAN'T!
...
YOUR EXPRESSION... YOUR SOUL IS WEIGHED HEAVILY AS IF IT WAS DOUBLED, AN INTANGIBLE FEELING... I CAN'T DRAW THE REAL YOU...!
I... I CAN ONLY SEE YOUR OUTER APPEARANCE...
...
I CAN'T ACCEPT YOUR MONEY... SORRY...

OH... YOU'RE SAYING IT LACKS... EXPRESSION
...
I FELT THE SAME THING, BUT THAT ARTIST SAID IT DIDN'T CAPTURE HER EXPRESSION. JUST A LIFELESS PIECE OF WORK...
AH, THIS DRAWING IS AMAZING! IT LOOKS JUST LIKE YOU!
HE'S JUST A WEIRD GUY, RIGHT SHANIN?
...
HE SAYS HE LACKS THE SKILL AT THE SAME TIME HE PACKS UP HIS SUPPLIES... BUT THE DRAWING IS EXCELLENT
...SHA-NIN...?
WHAT IS GOING ON... THAT GUY...
Bdum

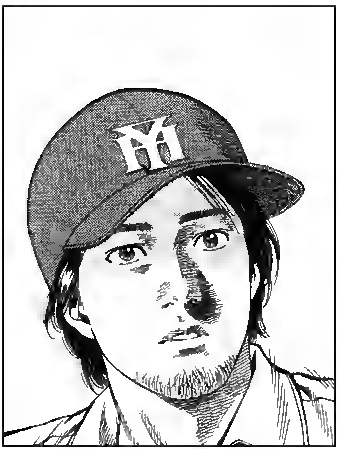
THAT'S WHAT RYO-PAPA CALLED IT...
A THRILL ...
Bdum
THIS KIND OF FEELING... SO SIMILAR TO WHAT IT FELT WHEN I FIRST MET RYO-PAPA...
MORE PEACEFUL... LIKE IT WANTS ME TO REMEMBER...!
BUT THIS... IS A BIT DIFFERENT ...
Bdum
Bdum
Bdum
Bdum
KAORI-MAMA... WHAT IS THIS FEELING? IS IT REACTING BECAUSE OF YOUR MEMORIES, MAMA?

WON'T YOU TELL ME... MAMA...?
Bdum
HA HA!
HA!
HA HA!
...
HA HA HA
WHEE!
HEE HEE!
KYA HA!
WHAT... WHAT AM I DOING...?
Ii~ Ii~ Ii~

I'M...
I'M REALLY STUPID...
夏目芳樹個展
I'M SUCH A TOTAL HOPELESS IDIOT!!
F23
夏目芳樹個展
!!

…
とう！
…?
とう
THAT GIRL IS...!!
KAORI-MAMA!?
夏目芳樹個展
…
IT IS MAMA...!

DID YOU JUST CALL KAORI... I MEAN, THE WOMAN IN THIS PICTURE, MAMA?
ピク
...MAMA...
ムク
ムクッ
I KNEW IT! KAORI-MAMA KNOWS THIS PERSON...!
AND THIS PERSON KNOWS KAORI-MAMA!
Bdum



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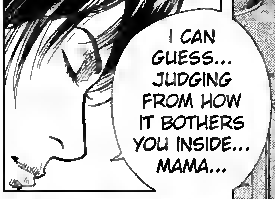
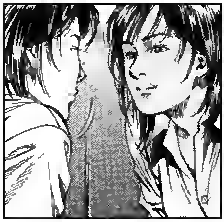
Chapter 91 Truthful Expression

KAORI
1987年

YOU'RE...
KAORI'S DAUGHTER... RIGHT?
HA... HA HA!
...
THIS... CAN'T BE POSSIBLE! HOW CAN YOU BE AT YOUR AGE!? KAORI WAS JUST IN HER THIRTIES!

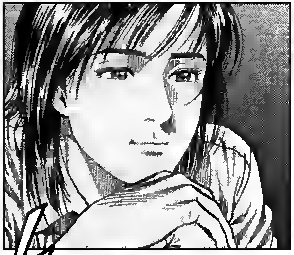
IF IT'S KAORI MAKI-MURA
ピクッ
PERSON'S PORTRAIT... IS MY MOM'S
...
夏目
THEN THIS...
夏目芳樹
...
Bdum
ニヤ

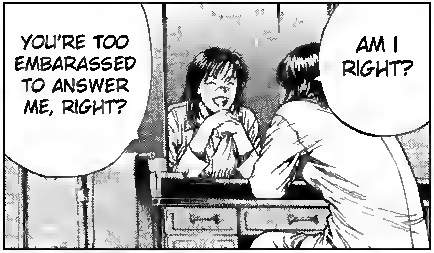

I CAN GUESS... JUDGING FROM HOW IT BOTHERS YOU INSIDE... MAMA...



SO... HE WAS KAORI-MAMA'S CLASSMATE FROM JUNIOR HIGH!

HE... NATSUME YOSHIKI MUST HAVE BEEN YOUR FIRST LOVE!!




YOU'RE TOO EMBARASSED TO ANSWER ME, RIGHT?
AM I RIGHT?

17

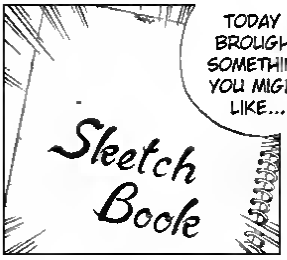
...
AD-OPTED DAUGH-TER!
...
I'M AN ORPHEN, BUT I WAS ADOPTED BY MY PARENTS...
SO I SEE...
THAT'S JUST LIKE HER...
...

OF COURSE YOU DO!
ニコ
DO YOU... LIKE YOUR MOTHER?
REALLY...
YES...!
ドクン
OF COURSE YOU CAN.
I WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT... HER... FROM BACK WHEN SHE WAS MY AGE... MY UNKNOWN MOTHER...
AH! THEN... CAN I COME BACK TOMORROW?
HE'S A REALLY NICE PERSON...
ドクン
WHAT A GENTLE... SMILE...

AH-SHAN?
YOU'RE STILL AWAKE?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING TALKING TO THE MIRROR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?
WHAT'S UP WITH HER?
HUH?
EH? EH?
IT'S A S.E.-C.R.E.T!!!
IS MAMA.. ALSO EXCITED ABOUT TOMORROW?
Bdum
Bdum

IS IT OKAY...? LEAVING YOUR SOLO EXHIBIT?
DON'T WORRY, THE GALLERY STAFF WILL HELP ME LOOK AFTER IT.
喫茶
Gallary
ギャラリー

夏目芳樹
個展
いずみ画廊


Sketch Book

TODAY I BROUGHT SOMETHING YOU MIGHT LIKE...
BY THE WAY, SHANIN...
ガサ

THE TRUTH IS, I'M ONLY REALLY GOING TO THE OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES.
AH...

...?

ALTHOUGH, I DON'T THINK IT'S GOOD ENOUGH TO BE SEEN IN PUBLIC
...
パラ

!!
THESE ARE...!!
THEY'RE ALL SKETCHES OF KAORI-MAMA!
EVEN IF...
THEY'RE ALL "FAILURES"
SO THIS...
IS WHAT MAMA LOOKED LIKE IN THE PAST.
FOR SOME REASON, I COULD ONLY EVER DRAW HER OUTER EXPRESSION... ONLY YOUR MOTHER GAVE ME THAT PROBLEM.
NO, THAT'S NOT TRUE! THESE SKETCHES... SHE LOOKS SO ALIVE!

HER... SMILE IS CAPTIVATING
NO MATTER HOW I DREW HER, I COULDN'T CONFIDENTLY SAY I CAPTURED HER TRUE EXPRESSION.
...
ONLY YOUR MAMA...
ALL OF MY OTHER CLASS-MATES WERE EASIER TO DRAW...
THAT WAS THE PART I COULDN'T EXPRESS. IT WAS SO FRUSTRATING, SO I JUST KEPT SKETCHING...
BUT I ALWAYS FELT THERE WAS SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN HER, JUST BENEATH THE SURFACE...
SHE WAS ALWAYS FULL OF THIS CONTA-GIOUS CHARM.

PORTRAIT... THAT'S HOW IT CAME TO BE?
SO THAT...
...
ONLY THAT PORTRAIT IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS IN THE SKETCH-BOOK...
THERE IS... AN UNKNOWN LONLINESS...
THE TRUTH IS, SHE NEVER MADE THAT EXPRESSION IN FRONT OF ANYONE.
BUT... I FELT THIS WAS THE REAL HER.
WHEN I MANAGED TO DRAW THAT... I DECIDED TO BECOME AN ARTIST. THAT WAS THE DRAWING THAT DECIDED MY CAREER.
...

YOUR MOTHER, SHE DIDN'T LIKE MY DRAWING OF HER PORTRAIT.
BUT KAORI...
...
WHAT...? THIS...?
HA HA!
WA HA!
THIS... IS ME...?
I FELT THAT... THIS WAS THE TRUE YOU...
EH?

THAT'S WHY... I WANT TO THANK YOU!
JUST YOUR APPEARANCE... I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND YOU... BUT THIS TIME I THINK I SUCCEEDED...
ALTHOUGH I DON'T HAVE A COPY... JUST CALL IT INSTINCT. I COULDN'T DRAW YOUR FACE...
...
DRAWING THE "TRUE YOU..."
THAT GAVE ME CONFIDENCE, MADE ME WANT TO BECOME AN ARTIST!
DON'T...
DON'T EVER SHOW THIS DRAWING TO ME AGAIN!!
DON'T KID AROUND...!
SFX FWAP

...
KA... KAORI!
BECAUSE I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION... I WAS THE ONE WHO HURT HER...
WHEN SHE SAW THE PICTURE, SHE FELT AS THOUGH I DISCOVERED EVERYTHING IN HER HEART. THAT'S WHY SHE WAS SO UPSET... SHE APOLOGIZED...
FROM THAT MOMENT, SHE CONCEALED THE SHOCK AND SADNESS OF FINDING OUT SHE WAS ADOPTED FROM EVERYONE... SHE SAID...
THE ONE WHO SHOULD HAVE APOLOGIZED... WAS ME...
IT WASN'T UNTIL GRADUATION... WHEN SHE TOLD ME THE TRUTH...
THAT HER PARENTS... WEREN'T REALLY HER BIOLOGICAL PARENTS...

YOU WILL DEFINITELY BECOME A GOOD ARTIST!
TRY YOUR BEST!!
...
SHE IS A GOOD PERSON...
REALLY ...
KAORI'S HUSBAND... WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS YOUR FATHER!?
...
LOOKING AT YOU, I CAN TELL...
YOU MUST HAVE BEEN ONE BIG, HAPPY, FAMILY.
...
NOW, SHE... SHE MUST BE REALLY HAPPY NOW...

KAORI-MAMA... SHE...
SHE... SHE IS... NO LONGER WITH US...
EH...?
SHE PASSED AWAY...
LAST YEAR...

MISTER...
NATSU-ME...?
IT WAS A TRAFFIC ACCIDENT...
SEEING THAT MISTER NATSUME WAS CRYING UNINTENTIONALLY..
BECAUSE HE WAS... ALREADY IN LOVE WITH KAORI-MAMA SINCE THEY MET
AT [illegible] MOMENT...
REALIZED...

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EDITOR: VICISSITUDE
QC: NOMIMINO
RAWS: STALYN

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Chapter 92 Is this Love?

KAORI...? HER...?
HA HA!
...DEAD?
喫茶 Gallary ギャラリー
YAY!
WHEE!
HA!
...
MISTER... NATSUME...

SO- I'M SORRY!
I...
SUCH... A PAINFUL EXISTENCE...
I LET YOU TELL ME... MADE YOU STIR SUCH PAINFUL MEMORIES...
MY INSENSITIVITY... JUST LIKE THE TIME I HURT YOUR MOM...
I OFFENDED YOU AGAIN... I'M SORRY...

MISTER NATSUME...
YOU'RE CRYING... PLEASE USE THIS TO CLEAN UP...
EH?
EH, REALLY...
WHY... WHY AM I CRYING?

I'M REALLY SORRY ABOUT THIS...
SORRY...
STRANGE... YOU PROBABLY THINK I'M SOME SORT OF WEIRDO..
I... I CAN'T SEEM TO STOP...
...
YET HE'S STILL CONCERNED FOR OTHERS...
HE WAS CRYING UNKNOWINGLY...
...

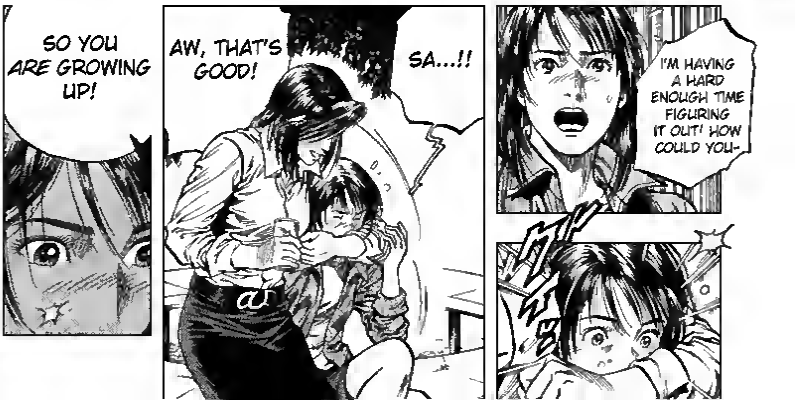
"Bdum"
MISTER NATSUME'S HEART IS...
"Bdum"
"Bdum"
HIS KINDNESS AND GRIEF ARE ALL SOAKED INTO THIS HANDKERCHIEF...
OH... HERE YOU ARE, AH-SHAN...
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHY DONT YOU TURN ON THE LIGHTS?
HUH?
NOTHING...
...

…
夏目芳樹個展
いずみ画廊
…
HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE AROUND TODAY...
HE DID SAY HE'S ONLY USUALLY AROUND FOR OPENINGS
いずみ画廊
ANYWAY, IT ISN'T LIKE WE HAD A SET DATE

AH-SHAN!

AM I GETTING SICK...? I...
...
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT. WHAT IS IT SO SUDDENLY?
FEELINGS OF... "HEART PAINS...?"
WHEN I THINK ABOUT HIM... MY HEART FEELS LIKE THAT...
...
ONE LOOK AT THIS... THE HANDKER-CHIEF THAT HE USED...
...

...
AM I GETTING SICK? I...
Bwah ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!!
M-MISS SAEKO!?
MY FACE FEELS HOT, LIKE I HAVE A FEVER...
WANTING TO SEE HIM AGAIN, THINKING THAT I'LL NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN.
JUST MAKES ME WANT TO SEE HIM SO MUCH MORE...


SO YOU ARE GROWING UP!
AW, THAT'S GOOD!
SA...!!
I'M HAVING A HARD ENOUGH TIME FIGURING IT OUT! HOW COULD YOU-

THIS ISN'T SOME KIND OF SICKNESS, AH-SHAN!
...?
WHAT YOU'RE FEELING IS...
...
ARE YOU SERIOUS!?
...
I'M QUITE SURE! AND VERY RELIEVED. SHE'S GROWING UP INTO QUITE THE LADY.
NO WONDER I FEEL LIKE... SHE'S BEEN ACTING STRANGE LATELY...
W-WELL ...

SHANIN...?
SO WHAT IS IT? YOU'RE HER FATHER BUT YOU'RE NOT HAPPY?

...

THANKS FOR WAITING. HERE YOU GO.

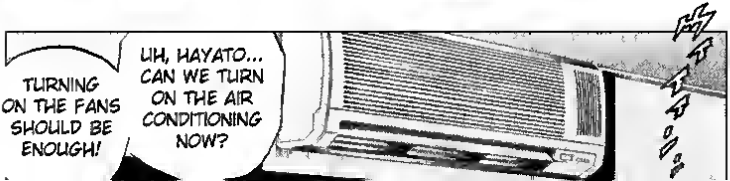
...?
...

...OH YEAH...

SMOOTH...
I WAS SO HAPPY, I FORGOT TO ASK!

SO... WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS HE?

BUT... WE CAN'T BE TOO SURE ABOUT THIS YET.
NO... NOT REALLY.


TURNING ON THE FANS SHOULD BE ENOUGH!
UH, HAYATO... CAN WE TURN ON THE AIR CONDITIONING NOW?

COMPLETELY ... INFLEXIBLE!
...
WHY NOT!? SUMMER'S NOT HERE YET, BUT IT'S SO HOT!
HMPH! AIR CONDITIONING IS ONLY FOR THOSE NOT USED TO HARD WORK!
!!
AH, HOW THOUGHT-FUL OF YOU SHANIN!
ひょい
THANKS! I WAS DRENCHED IN SWEAT!
ふきふき
W-WAIT! THAT'S...!
SFX: DOOM!
SFX: WIPE WIPE

WHAT'S THE MATTER? SH-SHANIN?
HUH?
SHIN...
SHIN-HON!!
NOT IN THE FACE!!
Wark...

...
AH...
YEAH. TYPHOON 'SHANIN!'
DID YOU GET HIT BY A TYPHOON!?
WH... WHAT HAPPENED?
...
IT WASN'T "THAT" HANDKER-CHIEF!?
YOU DON'T MEAN...
I'M NOT SURE WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THE SECOND SHIN-HON USED HER HANDKER-CHIEF TO WIPE HIS SWEAT, SHE WENT BERSERK!
AH-SHAN!? YOU'RE KIDDING!
...?

DOES... DOES THIS MEAN..?
...
THAT SEEMS TO BE THE CASE...
OTHER THAN THAT, YOU DON'T MEAN THAT..
IN LOVE!?
SHANIN, SHE'S...
...

SHIN-HON!
THIS IS...
IS THIS LOVE...?
...
BE STRONG, SHIN-HON! THE WOUNDS ARE NOT THAT DEEP!
BEE...
BEE...
BEE...
BE...
OH---
OH---!
SFX SIREN

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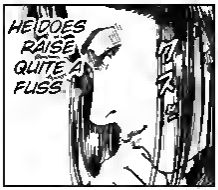
THEN SOONER OR LATER, THE RECIPIENT'S LIFE IS IN GRAVE, MORTAL DANGER!
IF AH-SHAN IS IN LOVE...
IF...
...?
THIS WILL HAPPEN! THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENED TO YOUR CAFE!
?
?
WHAT IF AH-SHAN'S LOVE IS ONE-SIDED, AND THE RECIPIENT DOESN'T RETURN THE FEELINGS?
?
OR, ESPECIALLY, IF THERE'S A MUTUAL ATTRACTION AND AH-SHAN'S BEEN TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF! WHAT DO YOU THINK WILL HAPPEN?
?

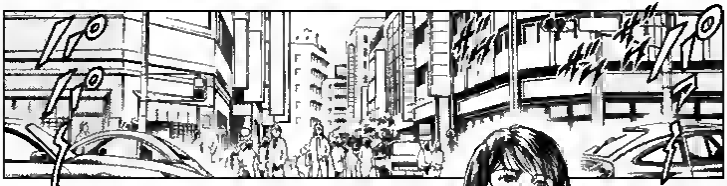
Chapter 93 A Feeling Deeper than Falling in Love

RIGHT. AH-SHAN WENT COMPLETELY BERSERK OVER JUST A SIMPLE HANDKER-CHIEF...!
IT'S A GOOD THING THAT IT HAPPENED TO SHIN-HON. THAT'S WHY HE'S STILL ALIVE. BUT IF IT WERE A NORMAL GUY...
OH...
...
HOW DARE YOU DUMP ME!?
YIKES!
AH!
HOW DARE YOU BETRAY ME!?
...

THAT IS A FATHER'S RESPONSI-BILITY!

IT DOES SEEM... VERY DANGER-OUS...
THAT'S WHY, NO MATTER WHAT, THIS MAN MUST BE FOUND AND WARNED!
...


HE DOES RAISE QUITE A FUSS.



...

SUPER FOOD
VERRY

...
...
AH!
THAT WAS CLOSE!
BUT... EVEN IF I HAVE TO RISK MY LIFE, I WILL FIND OUT IF SHANIN IS TRULY IN LOVE!

SHIN-HON...
UH-OH...
HUH?
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO, SNEAKING AROUND LIKE THAT...
OH, I EH... NO, THIS IS...
SHA-SHANIN!?
SHIN-HON!!
...
NO, I'M JUST JOGGING! OH, LOOK! IT'S TIME TO GO BACK TO THE HOSPITAL!

...EH!
AH, YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN BEFORE YOU CAN TAIL SHANIN, SHIN-HON .
SFX PANTING
EEK!
GET OUT!
'SCUSE ME!
HEY!
HUP!
HO!

…
トクッ
トクッ…
夏目芳
個展
み画廊
夏目芳
個展
…?
SFX: SHAKING
…
I STILL CAN'T DO THIS...!!

芳樹
展
"AN ART GALLERY...? NATSUME YOSHIKI'S... SOLO EXHIBIT?
EH...?
AH, ALL 3 COPIES, TOO! HOW MANY TIMES IS THIS NOW?
...
AH---!! MR NATSUME, THE POSTER'S BEEN STOLEN AGAIN!!
LET'S NOT TALK ABOUT THIS RIGHT NOW. HAS SHANIN COME BY YET, TODAY?
YOU MEAN THAT GIRL? NO, SHE HASN'T BEEN BY TODAY.
IF YOU SEE HER, COULD YOU PLEASE BRING HER TO SEE ME?
...
IS HE THE ONE ...?

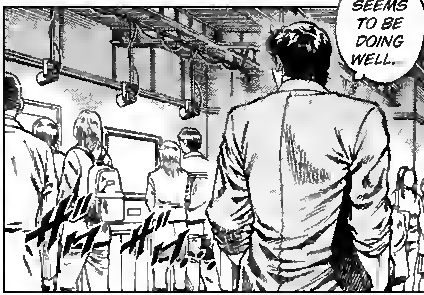
...
...
...
...
ガヤ
ガヤ
ガヤ

AH! MR NATSUME! WE WEREN'T FINISHED WITH OUT CONVER-SATION!
AH... YES...

...
AAAAAH!

ピピピ

...


HE SEEMS TO BE DOING WELL.
ガヤ
ガヤ

チラ

SO... AH-SHAN LIKES OLDER MEN?
BUT HE LOOKS YOUNGER THAN ME
SEX IS RUSHING
AH...!

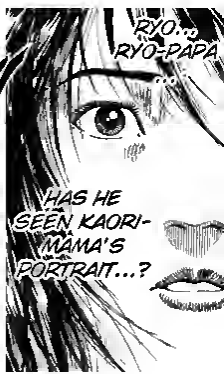
WHAT...!?

KAORI...!!
ドクン
...
...?
SO, MR NATSUME ...
OH, YES!
THE CON-TRACT MONEY IS...

WITH THIS EXPRESSION YOU SHOWED ONLY TO ME, KAORI... THIS EXPRESSION FROM DEEP WITHIN YOUR SOUL...
...I NEVER THOUGHT I WOULD... MEET KAORI... IN A PLACE LIKE THIS...
...
...
THAT MAN JUST NOW...

BUT I REALLY DO WANT TO SEE HIM... WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
GOT TO DECIDE...
...
夏目芳樹個展
RYO-PAPA ...!! WHAT IS HE DOING HERE!?
RYO...

...KAORI...


RYO...
RYO-PAPA...
HAS HE SEEN KAORI-MAMA'S PORTRAIT...?

RYO——!!
IT'S SIMILAR TO MY FEELINGS FOR NATSUME-SAN... BUT...
BUT IT'S MUCH, MUCH DEEPER!
KAORI-MAMA'S FEELINGS FOR PAPA
...IT'S LIKE BEING STABBED IN THE HEART...!
WHAT ...?

ギャルズ・クリーク
《天使》

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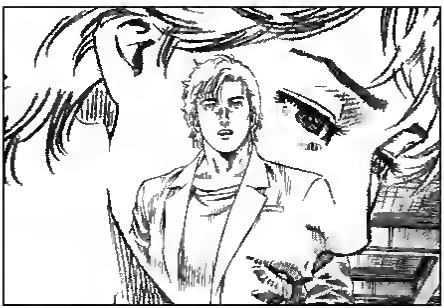
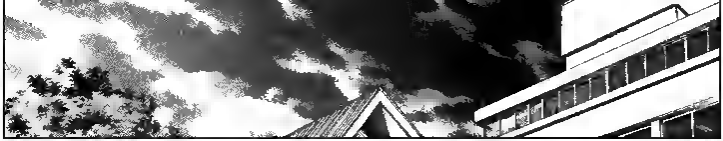
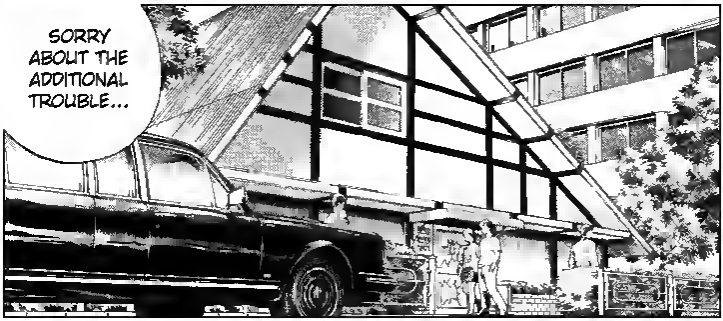
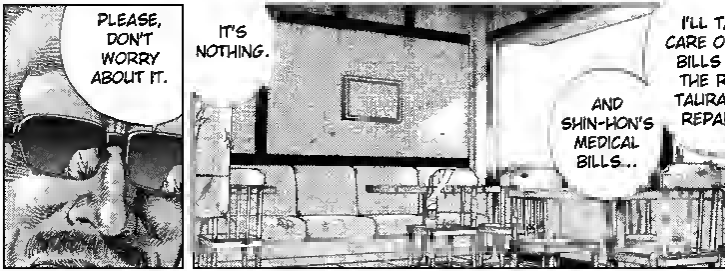
Chapter 94 Father's Love For His Daughter



SFX: CELL PHONE
... YES?
THIS IS CHIEF CHEN.
...
SIGN: NEW TOKYO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
Yes!
TELL ME ABOUT MY DAUGHTER WHAT IS SHANIN'S SITUATION?
IT'S ME. I JUST ARRIVED AT NARITA AIRPORT.
...




SORRY ABOUT THE ADDITIONAL TROUBLE...


PLEASE, DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
IT'S NOTHING.
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE BILLS FOR THE RESTAURANT'S REPAIRS.
AND SHIN-HON'S MEDICAL BILLS...

DO YOU THINK...
NOT REALLY...
THAT I'M A SILLY OLD MAN WHO SPOILS HIS DAUGHTER?
ﾌｫﾎﾟ

...
COFFEE HOUSE
CAT'S EYE
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, AH-SHAN...
SHANIN...
WE HAVE A RARE GUEST TODAY...
MR LI!

THIS JUST BRIGHTENS MY DAY...
JUST FINISHED, ACTUALLY. I THOUGHT I'D STOP BY.
IT'S BEEN SO LONG! ARE YOU IN TOWN FOR BUSINESS?
IT REALLY IS...
V-VERY...

UH UH
UH UH
UH UH
OHHH!!!
SFX: FAP FAP FAP FAP
EXCUSE ME!!
MR LI!?
TOILET
...
SFX: COUGH
PLEASE EXCUSE ME. BAD FISH, YOU SEE.
IF YOU NEED IT, I COULD GET SOME MEDICINE FROM THE STORE
ARE YOU ALRIGHT?
MR. LI! URHHHH!
SUCH...
SUCH KINDNESS AND GEN-EROSITY!
...? THAT'S... NICE.

UM.. PFF

UH UH
UH UH
UH UH
OHH!
...
SFX: FAP FAP FAP FAP

AH...
EXCUSE ME!!

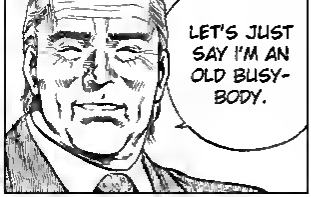
YOU HAVE CHANGED.

R-REALLY ...?
IT SEEMS THAT YOUR MURDEROUS AURA IS GONE YOU'RE MUCH MORE LADYLIKE NOW.

SFX: POURING COFFEE

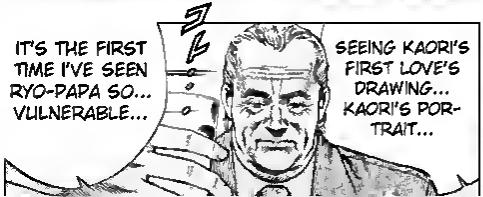
NOT ONLY THAT...

H-
HOW...
CAN IT
BE?
THERE SEEMS
TO BE A KIND
OF... MELAN-
CHOLY... IN
THOSE WHO
FALL IN LOVE...
SFX TING
IN
LOVE...
AM...
I...
...BUT...


LET'S JUST SAY I'M AN OLD BUSY-BODY.

SHARING YOUR PROBLEMS WITH A RELATIVE STRANGER IS EASIER THAT TALKING TO YOUR ACTUAL RELATIVES, IF I MAY...
SHALL WE FIND A PRIVATE PLACE TO TALK?

SAEBA WAS CRY-ING!?
三田接骨院
朋友


IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN RYO-PAPA SO... VULNERABLE...
SEEING KAORI'S FIRST LOVE'S DRAWING... KAORI'S POR-TRAIT...

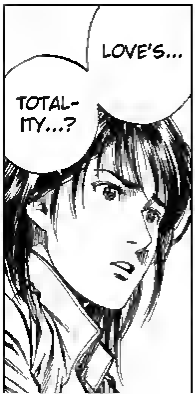
I WAS STANDING NEARBY, BUT HE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE ME...
AFTER SEEING RYO-PAPA'S TEARS...
KAORI-MAMA'S HEART FELT LIKE IT WANTED TO JUMP OUT OF MY CHEST...
BUT...
SFX SIGH
...
THAT PAINFUL LONGING MAMA HAS FOR PAPA, IT'S JUST LIKE THE FEELING I HAD WHEN I WAS THINKING ABOUT HIM. THAT'S HOW I KNEW I WAS IN LOVE...

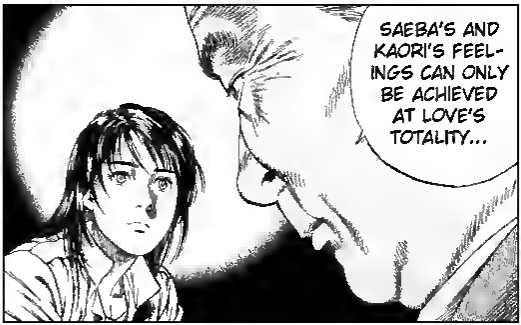
MAYBE IT IS JUST A CHILDISH FLING...
MY LOVE IS HARDLY COMPARABLE TO THEIRS...

KAORI-MAMA'S LONGING FOR PAPA IS MUCH DEEPER AND MORE INTENSE THAN MY OWN...
...

BUT..?
YOUR LOVE IS TRULY MOVING, BUT...

NO, NO ...
AH! YOU'RE LAUGHING AT ME! YOU MUST THINK THE SAME THING!

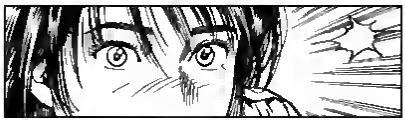

LOVE'S...
TOTAL-ITY...?

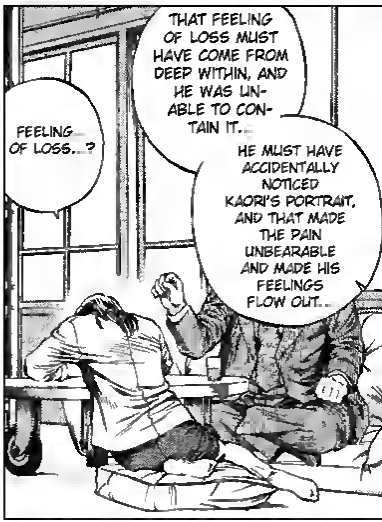

SAEBA'S AND KAORI'S FEEL-INGS CAN ONLY BE ACHIEVED AT LOVE'S TOTALITY...

DON'T UNDER-STAND!!
AH! I REALLY
THAT MUST HAVE BEEN TRUE LOVE!
NO NEED TO RUSH... SOME-DAY YOU'LL UNDERSTAND...
SLOW AND STEADY... SLOW AND STEADY...
EVEN MY CONFIDENCE IS GONE.
THIS WHOLE WORLD IS FULL OF THINGS I CAN'T UN-DERSTAND...

BUT... SAEBA LOST THAT LOVE. ALL THOSE FEELINGS WITH NOWHERE TO GO...

YOU ARE GROWING UP SO FAST... BEING YOUR FATHER, I CAN ONLY HAVE THIS LITTLE BIT...
MY DAUGHTER... WHEN YOU ARE JUST GETTING READY TO TAKE THAT FIRST STEP, TO BECOME AN ORDINARY GIRL...




FEELING OF LOSS...?
THAT FEELING OF LOSS MUST HAVE COME FROM DEEP WITHIN, AND HE WAS UNABLE TO CONTAIN IT...
HE MUST HAVE ACCIDENTALLY NOTICED KAORI'S PORTRAIT, AND THAT MADE THE PAIN UNBEARABLE AND MADE HIS FEELINGS FLOW OUT...

...MR LI...?

...

HIS TEARS ARE JUST LIKE RYO-PAPA'S...
FEELING OF LOSS...
I UNWILLINGLY THOUGHT BACK TOO MUCH...
AI YA! I CAN'T!
IT MUST BE... BECAUSE OF ALL THE LOVED ONES THAT HAVE GONE TO THE OTHER SIDE THAT CAUSED THE TEARS... I THINK THAT'S IT...
...
THE ELDERLY JUST CAN'T HOLD BACK THE TEARS, CAN WE...?
MR LI MUST HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT HIS DEPARTED BROTHER, THAT'S WHY... NO... NOT JUST THAT...

REALLY... WHAT A PAIR OF SILLY FATHERS..

THAT'S SIMPLY A SILLY FATHER'S STUPID BEHAVIOR

I HEARD FROM OLD MAN CHEN THAT YOU FLEW YOUR PRIVATE PLANE IN FROM TAIWAN. WHY?

HA HA HA!
I DON'T WANT TO HEAR THAT CRAP COMING FROM SOMEONE WHO JUST FOUND AND BECAME A SILLY FATHER TO MY DAUGHTER!

IT IS ALSO GOOD, IF SHANIN HAS FALLEN IN LOVE WITH A GOOD MAN...
BUT...

HEY! HEY!! YOU AREN'T THINKING ABOUT HAVING THE GEN BU* DO AN INVESTIGATION ON HIM AND THEN SNUFFING HIM OUT IF THINGS DON'T WORK OUT WITH SHANIN, ARE YOU!?
...

*GEN BU: BLACK TORTOISE

ふぅ
ふぅ

[EVIL_GENIUS]

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Chapter 95 I am in Love

TODAY I MUST...
SFX HEARTBEATS
SE-CRET-LY!
MEET WITH HIM!!
!!

SFX HEARTBEATS
THAT NATSUME YOSHIKI GUY...
SFX HEARTBEATS
IS FAMOUS ABROAD!
OH...
COME ON! ISN'T HE, LIKE, 30 YEARS OLD?
WHILE HE ISN'T TOO WELL-KNOWN IN JAPAN, HIS WORKS HAVE CIRCLED PARIS AND WON HIM HIGH ACCLAIM. HE'S A YOUNG, UPCOMING ARTIST WHO ONE SHOULD KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON.
YOUNG...?
...
SFX GRAB!

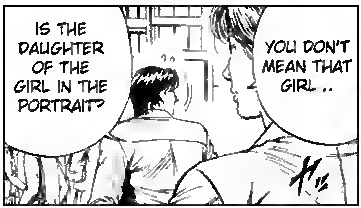
NOW, JAPAN'S ART DEALERS ARE FRANTICALLY HOPING TO LAND A CONTRACT WITH HIM AND IT'S ESCALATED INTO A FIERCE BATTLE!
ONE MIGHT SAY THIS EXHIBIT MARKS HIS TRIUMPHANT RETURN, SO SHUT YOUR MOUTH!
IT HURTS!
WHEN HE WAS IS, HE WENT OFF TO FRANCE. THIS IS HIS FIRST TIME BACK IN THE COUNTRY.
...

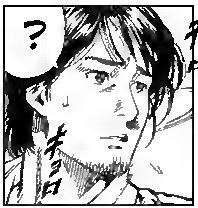
...
...
SHE'S BEEN STARING AT YOU THIS WHOLE TIME.
AH .. DO YOU KNOW THAT GIRL?
SHANIN!!
SFX. GULP!

すみ画廊

...
SHANIN!? WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?

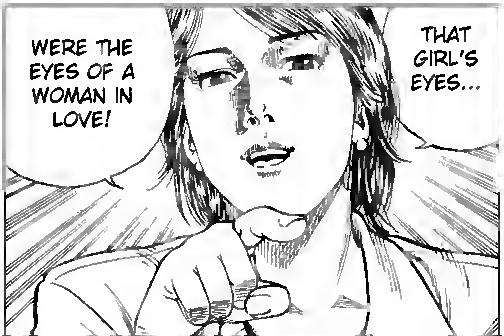
Y-YEAH...


IS THE DAUGHTER OF THE GIRL IN THE PORTRAIT?
YOU DON'T MEAN THAT GIRL ..

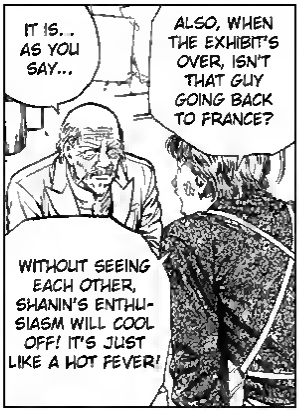

?

THAT'S NOT WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT!

OH...
I'M SORRY BUT I HAVE TO LOOK FOR HER!
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THE CONTRACT LATER!


WERE THE EYES OF A WOMAN IN LOVE!
THAT GIRL'S EYES...

QUIT KIDDING AROUND!
JEEZ!
...
Gallary
ギャラリー
夏目芳
個展
EVEN WITH NO PUBLICITY, THE ART EXHIBIT IS ALREADY SUCH A SUCCESS.
HE WILL SURELY BECOME A PROMISING ARTIST!
NATSUME'S GENTLE-STYLE WORK WILL SURELY CATCH ON IN JAPAN.
THINK ABOUT HIS AGE! THAT GUY WILL ONLY EVER SEE SHANIN AS A CHILD!!
YEAH!! THAT'S RIGHT!!
IT'S TOO EARLY TO TELL, ISN'T IT...!? MR LI...!?
WHAT WITH BEING AN ORDINARY CIVILIAN AND ALL!
HE MAY BE THE IDEAL MAN TO BRING SHANIN HAPPINESS.
!!


IT IS.. AS YOU SAY...
ALSO, WHEN THE EXHIBIT'S OVER, ISN'T THAT GUY GOING BACK TO FRANCE?
WITHOUT SEEING EACH OTHER, SHANIN'S ENTHUSIASM WILL COOL OFF! IT'S JUST LIKE A HOT FEVER!

WILL YOU ... PLEASE LISTEN TO ME!?
A JAPANESE WEDDING CEREMONY WOULD BE APPROPRIATE TOO!
あーだ こーだ
WE SHOULD GO WITH A CHINESE WEDDING CEREMONY!

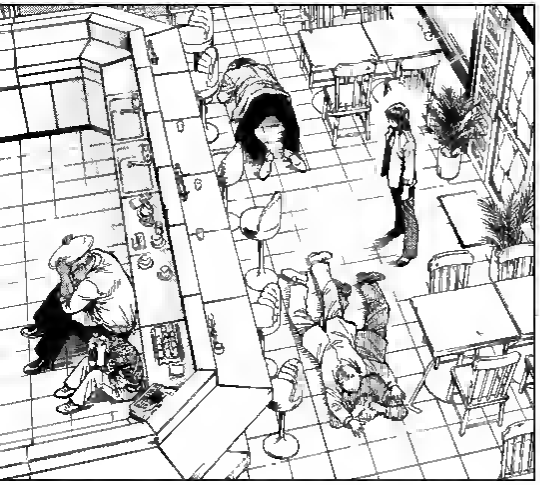
SFX BLAH BLAH BLAH THIS AND THAT THAT AND THIS

SFX SEETHING GROWL

SFX GLASS BREAKING

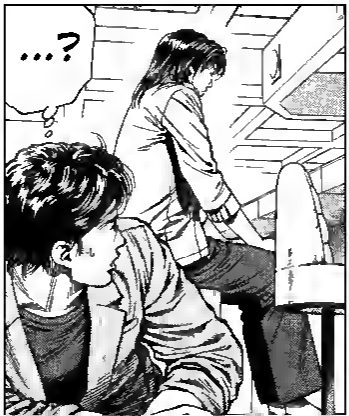
SFX SLAM! CLANG!

EVERYONE HIT THE DECK!!
DAN-GER!!



SFX: THUMP!

W-WHAT'S WRONG, AH-SHAN?
IT'S NO-THING!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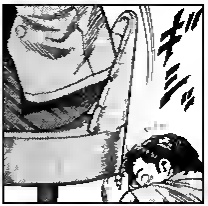


WHAT DID YOU JUST SAY!?
HIT THE DECK!
MAYBE NATSUME ALREADY HAS A GIRLFRIEND?
SFX: GRAB!
F5041S
Incoming call: Natsume Yoshiki
Sigh
SFX: CELL PHONE BEEPING

...?
EH...?
Y-YES...! IT'S ME, SHANIN!
SFX: SWUPT
I m at the CATS-EYE cafe but why does it look all broken-down?
SFX: GASP
HI... YOU MENTIONED A CAFE THAT YOU FREQUENT.
I WANTED TO ASK YOU FOR DI-RECTIONS.
NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, IT DOESN'T SEEM TO BE IN BUSINESS.
CATS EYE

NATSU-
ME!!!
WHA... WHAT HAP-PENED?
AH
SHA-NIN...
SO... WHY DID WE HAVE TO RUN?
HA!
HA HA!
...
WA-HA!
AH HA HA!

3 DAYS...
YOU DIDN'T COME... TO THE EXHIBIT...
BECAUSE I'M ANGRY!
WHY ALL OF A SUDDEN?
HA HA!
AH HA!
THAT WOMAN YOU WERE TALKING TO EARLIER... WHO IS SHE!?
HUH? AH!
IT LOOKED LIKE YOU TWO WERE HAVING AN ENJOY-ABLE CON VERSATION!
YOU MEAN MISS IZUMI? SHE'S THE OWNER OF THE GALLERY WHY DO YOU ASK?
I... WHY DID I GET SO ANGRY...?
AH, SHANIN ...

I WANTED TO MEET YOU, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE THE COURAGE! IT PAINS MY HEART EVEN MORE! WHY IS THIS!?
BUT BECAUSE I WAS SO SHY, I WAS UNABLE TO GET INSIDE! WHY!?
WANTING TO SEE YOU, NATSUME, I HAD TO GO TO THE ART GALLERY EVERY DAY!
EVERY DAY...

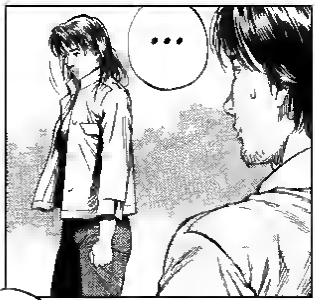
WHY DOES IT...
ALWAYS HURT SO MUCH!?

HUH? OH... YEAH!
NATSUME... ARE YOU THINKING THE SAME THING?

SAID... IT WAS BECAUSE I FELL IN LOVE...
EVERYONE ...

AND NOW I FEEL THE SAME WAY...

I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH YOU, NATSUME.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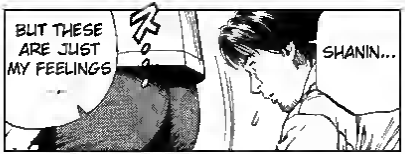
BUT THESE ARE JUST MY FEELINGS
SHANIN...

I JUST... WANTED TO TELL YOU MY FEELINGS...
I DON'T WANT TO FORCE MY LOVE ON YOU...

...
MR NATSUME IS AN ADULT... YOU MUST THINK I'M STILL JUST A CHILD... AFTER SEEING YOU TALK TO YOUR BOSS LADY, I WAS THINKING...
THAT WAS HOW A MATURE PERSON LOOKS AT OTHERS... WHICH IS NOT THE CASE WITH ME...

THAT IS ALL!
AH...!
...
少女の肖像
IS IT...
LOVE...?

WHY IS IT... THAT EVEN THOUGH YOU AND SHANIN AREN'T BLOOD-RELATIVES..
HOW COME... SHE'S SO MUCH LIKE YOU...?
WHAT'S WRONG... WITH ME NOW...?
KAORI... IS THERE SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME...?
NOW IT SEEMS LIKE... THIS HEART HAS TAKEN ME BACK TO THAT TIME IN JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL...
WANTING TO MEET HER...
I'VE ALSO COME HERE EVERY DAY..
HOPING THAT SHANIN WILL SHOW UP
I ALSO...

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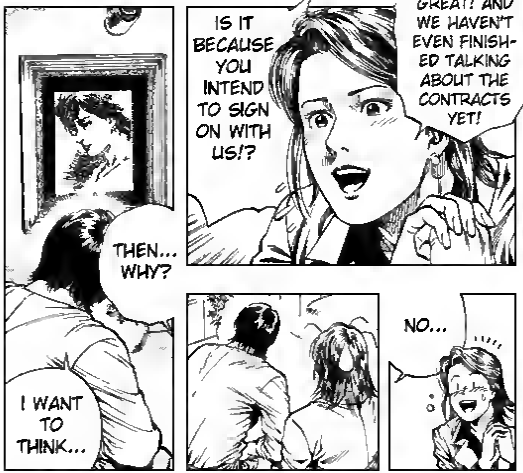
Chapter 96 Distant Promise

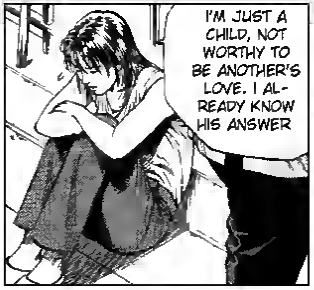
YOU'RE DELAYING YOUR RETURN TO PARIS!?
いがみ画廊
夏目芳樹 最終日


THAT'S GREAT! AND WE HAVEN'T EVEN FINISHED TALKING ABOUT THE CONTRACTS YET!
IS IT BECAUSE YOU INTEND TO SIGN ON WITH US!?
THEN... WHY?
I WANT TO THINK...
NO...

ORGANIZE MY THOUGHTS ...

...?
...
...
TODAY'S THE LAST DAY OF THE EXHIBIT... ISN'T IT?

...
IS IT ALRIGHT NOT TO GO?
YOU HAVEN'T GONE THESE LAST COUPLE OF DAYS... IS IT OKAY? ONCE THE EXHIBIT ENDS, HE MIGHT GO BACK TO PARIS.


I'M JUST A CHILD, NOT WORTHY TO BE ANOTHER'S LOVE. I ALREADY KNOW HIS ANSWER

...

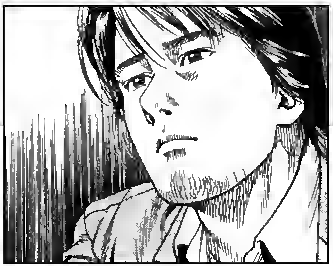
WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO SEE HIM?
I ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER, THAT'S WHY...

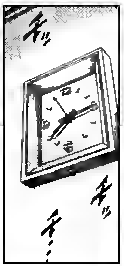
REALLY... THAT'S SO LIKE KAORI! ALWAYS JUMPING TO CONCLUSIONS SO QUICKLY!

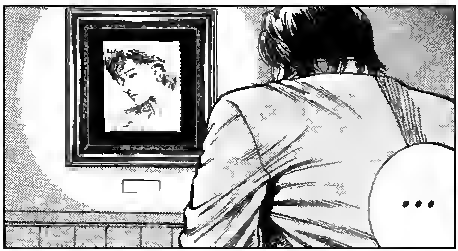
I JUST DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT FROM NATSUME HIMSELF...

...?
YOU AND KAORI... HUH!
!!
Message: Natsume Yoshiki
ピピピピピピ
あたふた
ピピピピピピ
SFX CELL PHONE RING
SFX PFF!
フゥ
...
NATSUME
...

Today is the closing ceremony of the exhibit
When the staff afterparty ends, I'll be staying
at the Gallery
Can you meet me at 8 o'clock?
I'll wait for you. - Natsume
いすみ画廊
036
...



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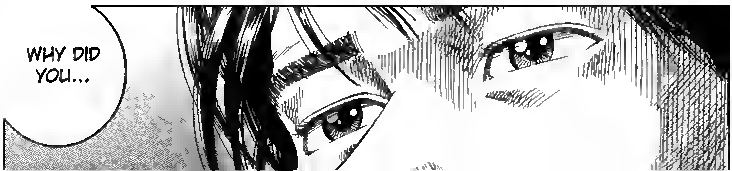
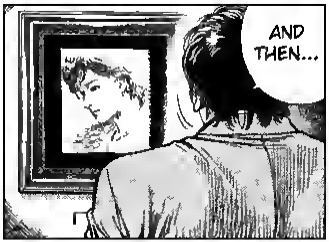
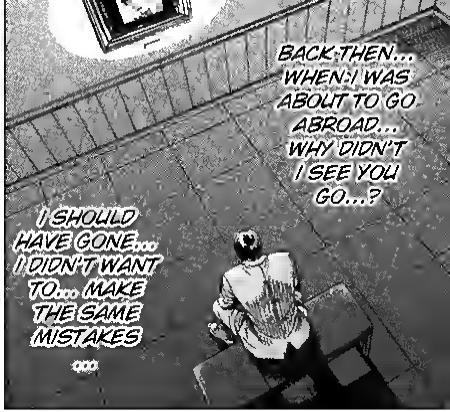

WHY DID YOU...

WHEN WILL YOU BE GOING BACK TO PARIS?
HA HA!
YEAH!
...
.. REALLY?
TOMOR-ROW...
THEN
LET'S MEET UP AGAIN, WHEN THE TIME COMES!
THAT'S IT...
卒業式

SAME TO YOU...! I'LL WAIT FOR YOU.
DON'T FORGET!
THAT DAY...
WILL BE THE DAY YOU INVITED ME TO SHOW ME THE DRAWING ...
...!
BUT... WHEN I LEARNED THAT NATSUME JUST TREATED ME LIKE A MODEL
IT DIDN'T LIVE UP TO MY EXPECTATIONS! HOW DISAPPOINTING!
I WOULD HAVE ANTICIPATED WHATEVER LITTLE THINGS MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED.

KA-KAORI!
GOOD-BYE!
W-WAIT!
JUST SAYING THE THINGS YOU WANTED TO SAY, THEN...
...
YOU DIDN'T EVEN LISTEN TO WHAT I HAD TO SAY...
DO YOUR BEST!
YOU WILL DEFINITELY BECOME A GREAT ARTIST!
THE TWO OF YOU REALLY ARE QUITE ALIKE...
...


AND THEN...


BACK THEN... WHEN I WAS ABOUT TO GO ABROAD... WHY DIDN'T I SEE YOU GO...?
I SHOULD HAVE GONE... I DIDN'T WANT TO... MAKE THE SAME MISTAKES ...

I WANT TO FULFILL THE PROMISE I MADE TO YOU...

PROMISE?

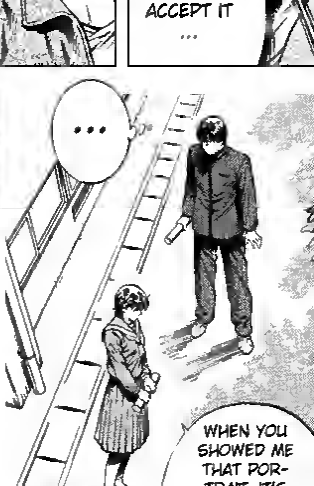
SHANIN...!
SHAN-

AH, TODAY-
THAT, I...
KAORI-MAMA'S PORTRAIT... IS THE ONLY ONE LEFT...
MM-HMM
...?
THAT WAS... LEFT FOR YOU...
...

YAY!
HA HA!
AH HA HA!
卒業式
BACK THEN... WITH KAORI... THIS IS A PROMISE TO YOUR MOTHER...
YOUR PARENTS AREN'T YOUR BIOLOGICAL PARENTS!?

I HOPE... YOU WILL ACCEPT IT ...

ARE YOU STILL KEEPING THE PORTRAIT?
I-I'M SORRY! I DIDN'T KNOW...


...
WHEN YOU SHOWED ME THAT PORTRAIT, IT'S LIKE YOU EXPOSED MY SOUL... THAT'S WHY I GOT ANGRY. I'M SORRY..

AH HA!
YEAH!
WEE!

PLEASE GIVE THAT PORTRAIT TO ME.. I'M SURE I CAN SMILE LOOKING AT IT! I WILL DEFINITELY GET BACK THAT PORTRAIT!
WHEN THE TIME COMES... EVEN IF I'M NOT SURE WHEN THAT DAY COMES...
CAN YOU... HELP ME KEEP IT?
EH...?
...?
I UNDER-STAND! ALRIGHT!
EVEN IF... I HAVE TO GO TO FRANCE
...
SO.. WHAT TIME WILL YOU BE GOING TO PARIS...?
IT'S A DEAL!

IF SHE WERE ALIVE TODAY, SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN LOOKING AT THIS PORTRAIT WITH A SMILE ON HER FACE... THAT'S WHY...
...

BUT NOW... SHE HAS HER OWN TRUE RELATIVES...
EVEN IF IT'S TOO LATE TO GIVE IT TO KAORI...

ムクッ...

SHANIN... I HOPE YOU CAN ACCEPT THIS PORTRAIT IN KAORI'S PLACE!

...SHANIN?
ス...

ムクッ...

...
ドクン...
ドクン
ドクン
SHANIN...?
Thank you...

You still remember... Natsume...
...

KAORI'S SMILING FACE...
OR WAS IT JUST MY DESIRE TO SEE IT? MY IMAGINATION?
...
THAT... THAT WAS...
NO...
KAORI-MAMA IS REALLY HAPPY. SHE IS LOOKING AT THE PORTRAIT WITH A SMILE ...
KAORI-MAMA'S TRANSPLANTED HEART LIVES INSIDE MY BODY...
THAT'S WHY I KNOW... KAORI-MAMA IS SMILING...
KAORI-MAMA IS INSIDE MY HEART...
MY HEART IS KAORI-MAMA'S HEART...
ドクン

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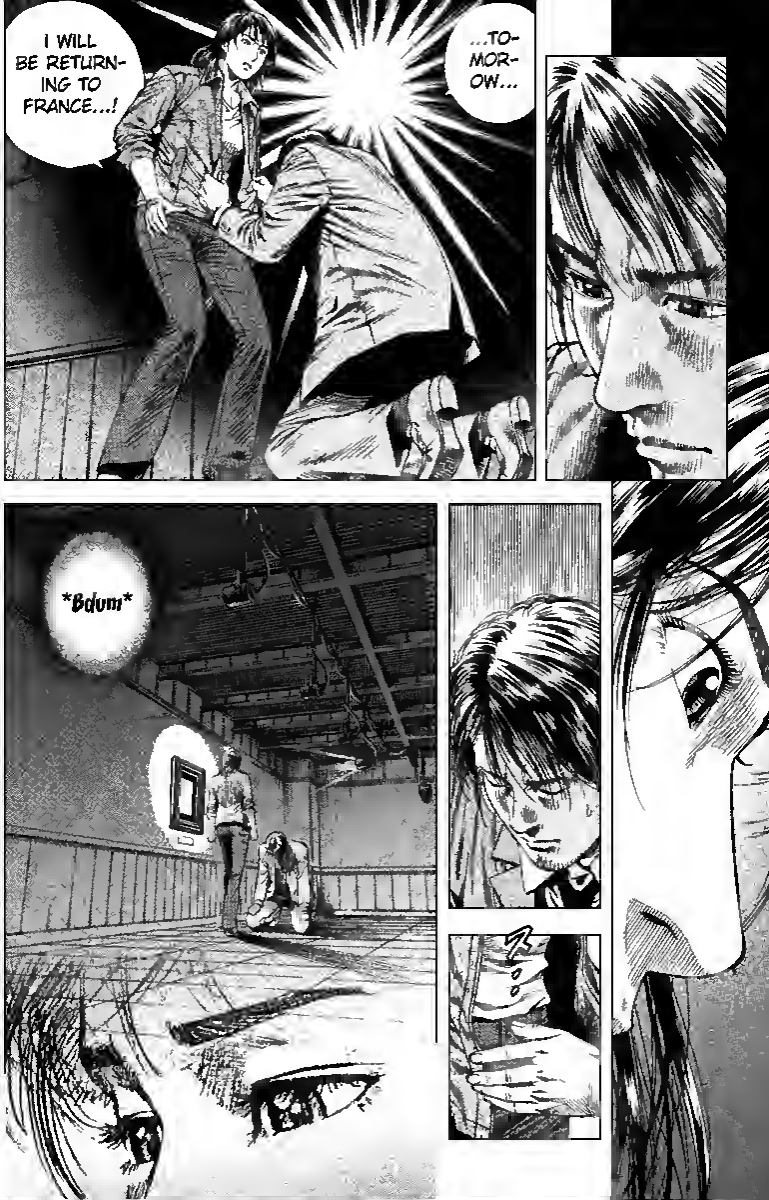
KAORI... SHE'S...
INSIDE... OF YOUR BODY...!?
ALIVE INSIDE OF ME...
YES... INSIDE MY HEART...

Chapter 97 Smiling Face of Happiness

ブル
ブル
ブル
...AH...
AH AH
...!
ブル
ブル
...KAORI...
KAORI...

Bdum
Bdum
Bdum
Bdum
Bdum

I HAD SOMETHING TO TELL YOU TODAY...
THAT TIME IN THE PARK... WHEN YOU CONFESSED YOUR FEELINGS TO ME...
I WANT TO TELL YOU... MY ANSWER
Bdum
...SHA-NIN...
SHANIN... I...
I...
THAT'S WHY...
I WANT-ED... TO MEET WITH YOU...


I WILL BE RETURN-ING TO FRANCE...!
...TO-MOR-OW...
Bdum

...

...
MISS IZUMI... THANK YOU FOR YOUR HOSPITAL-ITY
いずみ画廊
EH... TAKE CARE!
いずみ画廊
I...
I WON'T GIVE UP!
I'LL SOON FOLLOW YOU TO PARIS AND I'LL FORCE YOU TO SIGN THAT CONTRACT!
...
HA HA HA!
WAH HA!!

HA HA!
HA HA HA!
YAY!
I'VE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH YOU, NATSUME...
...
...

SFX THUMP

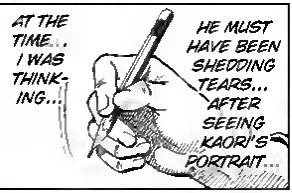
HEARD IT FROM MY DAUGHTER. YOU'RE THAT PORTRAIT ARTIST, RIGHT?

!?
CAN YOU PLEASE DRAW MY PORTRAIT?

...

UH...?

THIS PERSON IS...!!

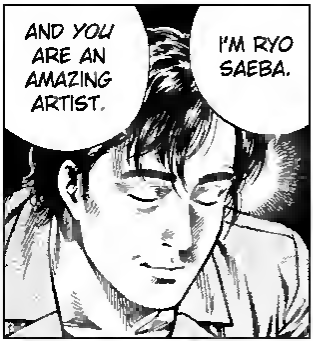

AT THE TIME... I WAS THINK-ING...
HE MUST HAVE BEEN SHEDDING TEARS... AFTER SEEING KAORI'S PORTRAIT...

BETTER START DRAWING, OR YOU'LL MISS YOUR FLIGHT.
UH...!?
AH... YES!

THIS PERSON IS...!!
IT'S POS-SIBLE THAT HE'IS...

HE'S FROM THAT DAY...
THERE'S NO MIS-TAKING IT...!

CAN YOU NOT DRAW SHANIN'S FACIAL EXPRESSIONS?


I'M RYO SAEBA.
AND YOU ARE AN AMAZING ARTIST.

AH... YOU ARE...
YOU'RE REALLY SOME-THING

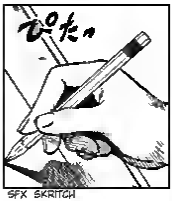
YOU SAID YOU SAW TWO SOULS WITH AN INTANGIBLE FEELING... WHY IS THAT?
...YES...

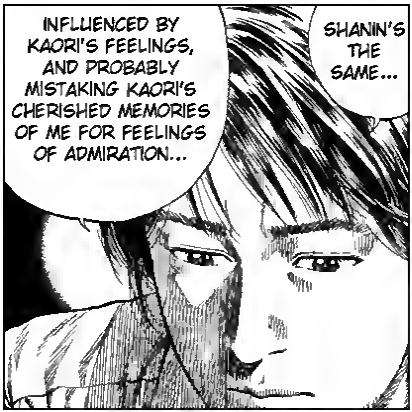
...

LAST NIGHT ...
THERE ARE TWO HEARTS... SHANIN'S EXPRESSION MADE ME UNSURE, THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T DRAW IT...
KAORI'S HEART LIVES INSIDE HER HEART...
I UNDERSTOOD THE REASON WHY I CAN'T DRAW... AFTER SEEING SHANIN LAST NIGHT
...
WHEE!
HA HA HA!
AH HA!

...
INSIDE SHANIN'S BODY...
BUT... THIS IS ALSO PROBABLY CAUSED BY KAORI'S HEART...

I...
SHANIN'S THE SAME...
AM ALSO ATTRACTED TO SHANIN...


SFX SKRITCH


INFLUENCED BY KAORI'S FEELINGS, AND PROBABLY MISTAKING KAORI'S CHERISHED MEMORIES OF ME FOR FEELINGS OF ADMIRATION...

BUT WE CAN'T JUST SAY THIS BASED ON ASSUMPTIONS...
I HAVE ALSO THOUGHT OF THIS...

BUT...
I'M ALSO CONFUSED...

I FEEL THAT, WHETHER IT'S SHANIN OR ME, WE BOTH NEED MORE TIME...
THAT'S WHY... I'VE DECIDED TO RETURN TO PARIS...
...RIGHT.
...
HA HA!
WHEE!!
AH HA HA!
BEING ABLE TO MEET YOU...
I'M GLAD...
SFX: CLACK

I CAN ONLY HOPE ...
MAYBE...
BEING ABLE TO MEET YOU, I'M SURE SHE HAS FOUND HAPPINESS.
THE SAME GOES FOR KAORI..
...
AND BECAUSE YOU WERE ABLE TO MEET SHANIN...
BECAUSE OF YOU..
K...
LAST NIGHT, SHE WAS ABLE TO LOOK AT MY DRAWINGS AND SMILE!

BEING ABLE TO MEET HER AGAIN WITH A HAPPY SMILE ON HER FACE, I'M GLAD. REALLY...
THAT, NOW, IS KAORI'S SMILING FACE...
...
フゥ...
SFX: FFF'

[EVIL_GENIUS]

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TRANSLATOR: KANGXI
EDITOR: VICISSITUDE
QC: NOMIMONO
RAWS: STALYN

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HA
HA
HA
Chapter 98 Tearful Farewell to Your First Love
HA
HA
AirFrance flight 275 to Paris, France will be departing at 12:00
Last call for processing of travel documents is now over.
HA
HA
HA

SOUTH WING DEPARTURES
SCHEDULED TIME
12:00
PARIS
12:50
SFX CLACK CLACK CLACK
SCHEDULED TIME
12:50
HONG KONG
SFX TURBINE SPEEDING UP
SFX RATTLING
SFX JETS ROAR
NATSU-
ME!!!

AT THE VERY LEAST, LET ME SEE YOU..
ONE LAST TIME...
HA
HA
HA
HA
I DECIDED NOT TO REGRET THIS... IF I HAD KNOWN...
I SHOULD HAVE.. DECIDED EARLIER ...
EVEN ONE LOOK WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE...

...
DREAM...
WHEN NATSUME WAS GOING TO PARIS... MAMA HAD GONE TO SAY GOOD-BYE...
THAT DREAM WAS KAORI-MAMA'S ...!

REGRET...

DECIDED NOT TO REGRET... AT THE VERY LEAST...
A LOOK WOULD BE FINE ...

...

着信
Calling
Ryo-Papa
!!
SFX CELL PHONE RINGING
HEY...
I...
IT'S LIKE THIS... THE NUMBER 41 EXPRESS TRAIN FROM SHINJUKU WILL BE ARRIVING AT NARITA IN AROUND 18 HOURS AND 11 MINUTES
NATSUME WILL BE RIDING THAT SERVICE TO THE AIRPORT... DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
THIS TIME... YOU CAN STILL MAKE IT...!

HA...
SFX: BEEP
4番線 発車時刻
成田エクスプレス41号
...
The departed 18 hour 11 minute express train will be arriving in Narita shortly

The train has arrived. Please remain behind the while line.
OW!
SFX: PING-BONG
4
成田エクスプレス
Narita Express
HEY! BE CAREFUL!
SFX: ELEVATOR MUSIC
ポロロロン
ポーン
...

NEX
SFX: PING BONG
!!
NATSUME..
ポンポン
ポロロン
ポーン♬
SFX: ELEVATOR MUSIC
SHANIN!?
NAT-
SUME!!

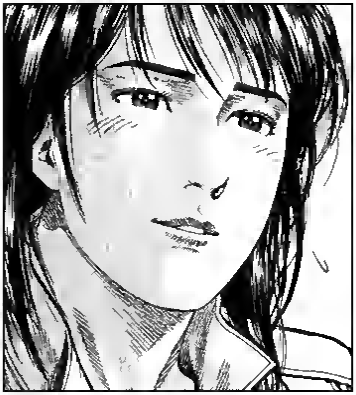
…
成田エクスプレス
冬景色
ドドドド
…
NEX
…!
…!
SFX: SCREECHING
キキィ

There is some malfunction with the signals The train will pause for a brief stop
...
The train will stop at the station for the moment
We are now currently investigating the cause...
SFX WHEW
REALLY... WHAT A TROUBLESOME COUPLE...

...
...
NATSUME
...
YOU CAME
...
TO SAY
GOODBYE?
...
THA-
THANK
YOU...
...

I DIDN'T WANT IT TO BE LIKE KAORI-MAMA...
THAT SAME REGRET... THAT'S WHY ...
NE- NEXT TIME...
NEXT TIME WE MEET... I THINK I WILL BE ABLE TO DRAW YOUR LIKENESS...
INSIDE YOUR BODY, NOW... YOUR HEART AND KAORI'S ARE INTWINED TOGETHER... THAT'S WHY SEEING YOU NOW... MADE ME UNSURE OF THE EXPRESSION, FOR NOW I CAN'T DRAW YOU...
...?

THIS FEELING I HAVE ...
BY THAT TIME...
YOU, BECOMING THE TRUE SHANIN, WILL ONE DAY COME ...
BUT, THE DIFFERENCE THAT EXISTS BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE, SOONER OR LATER WILL SURELY BE MERGED TO BECOME A SINGLE PERSON.
I WILL SURELY RETURN TO DRAW YOUR LIKENESS!
...IS THAT A PROMISE?

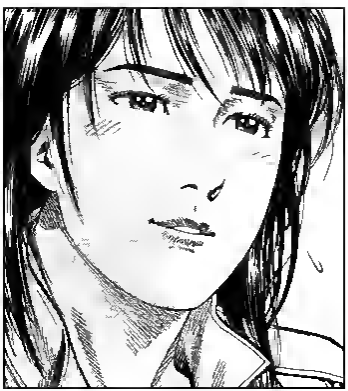


For those passengers in a hurry, we appologize for the delay

The train will now start...
ピンポンポロロンポン
SFX: ELEVATOR MUSIC
NEX
ポロロンピン…♪
SFX: ELEVATOR MUSIC
TAKE CARE... AND GOODBYE... SHANIN...
...THEN...
ALSO...
...YES...
ピッ

KAORI...
FAREWELL...
SFX: TRAIN HORN
SFX: FU-SHUU
SFX: TRAIN HORN

SFX TRAIN CLATTERING
SFX TRAIN CLATTERING
SFX TRAIN CLATTERING
SFX THUMP
SFX TRAIN CLATTERING



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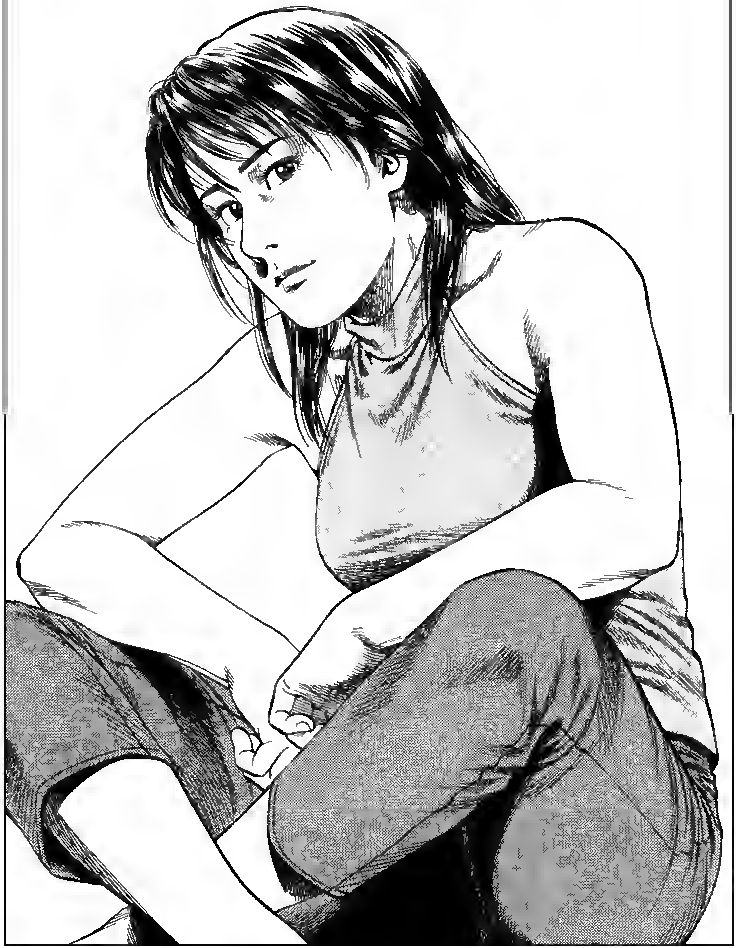
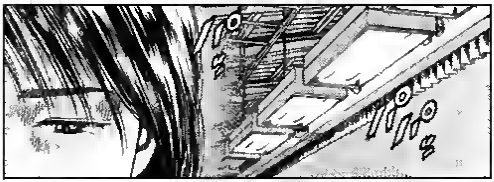
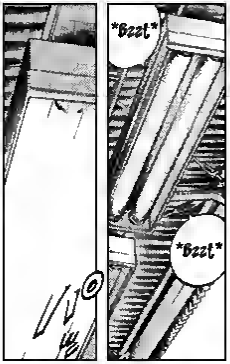
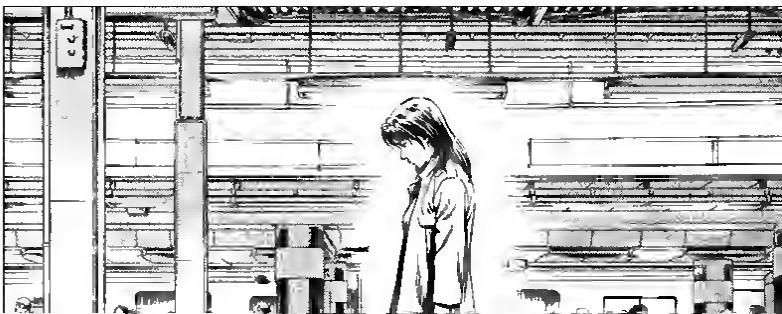
Chapter 99 The Feelings of Those in Love



SFX BUZZING FLICKERING LIGHTS





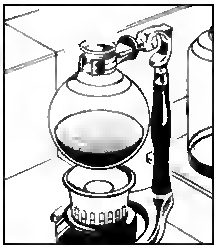


...
...
IS TO USE BOTH OF THESE HANDS TO HOLD YOU...
RIGHT NOW, WHAT I WOULD LIKE ...
...
IF IT'S POSSIBLE ...

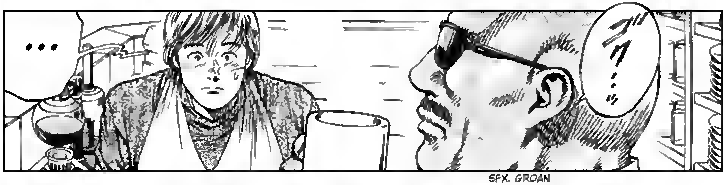
ALTHOUGH I HAVE PREPARED MY HEART FOR THIS...
BESIDES WANTING TO PROTECT HER, I COULDN'T DO ANYTHING ...
...
BUT SEEING HER IN SUCH AN IMMEASURABLE PAIN... LIKE THIS...
IT REALLY IS GRATIFYING... SEEING MY DAUGHTER GROWING UP EVERY DAY...
AAOOO
...
BUT NO... THAT'S YOUR MISSION, SAEBA
AT LEAST ...
HOLDING HER WITH THESE TWO HANDS SHOULD HAVE BEEN...
SEEING MY PITIFUL DAUGHTER SO HELPLESS LIKE THIS... IS TRULY PAINFUL...

LET'S GO! COME ON, LET'S GIVE IN TO THE ENDLESS TEMPTATIONS OF THE NIGHT!
WELL IF YOU WANT TO HOLD SOMEONE SO MUCH, WE'LL FIND YOU SOME GIRLS TO HOLD!
!?
A FATHER'S... INFLUENCE... IS SUFFICIENT.
DON'T WORRY!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!? YOU LITTLE BASTARD! AT YOUR DAUGHTER'S CRUCIAL HOUR...
AS HER FATHER, DON'T YOU THINK YOU SHOULD COMFORT HER!?
BESIDES STAYING TOGETHER, THE THINGS YOU CAN DO WITH YOUR DAUGHTER ARE LIMITED.

THOSE THINGS ARE BETTER LEFT TO THEIR MOTHERS, SO WHY DON'T WE JUST GO AND CELEBRATE OUR DAUGHTER'S GROWING UP?
WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE, OUR GETTING INVOLVED IN THEIR LOVE LIFE, WILL SURELY BE TROUBLE-SOME...
...
...
NO BUTS!
...
BUT, SAEBA..
LET'S GO! THE GIRLS ARE WAIT-ING FOR US!
ODAKYU
...



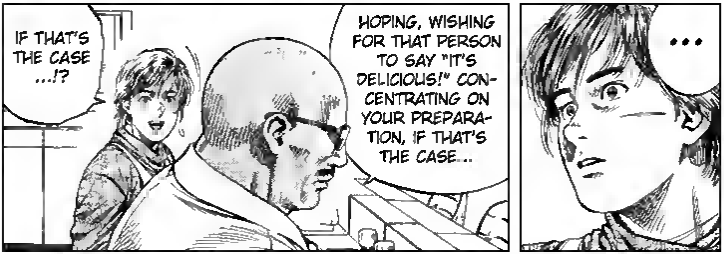
SFX SNIFF



SFX. GROAN

AH, HOW CAN I BE SO STUPID!? I'VE BEEN STUDYING FOR A YEAR AND I STILL CAN'T GET IT RIGHT!
カチャ
IF YOU WANT TO BE IN MY LEAGUE, IT WILL TAKE AT LEAST ANOTHER 10 YEARS.

THAT LONG!? IS THERE SOME SECRET TO THIS OR SOMETHING? MR HAYATO!!
10 YEARS !?
AND YOU USED TO BE SO DETERMINED, SHIN-HON...
WHAT ARE YOU... FOR WHOM DO YOU ..
WISH TO MAKE A GOOD CUP OF COFFEE FOR...?

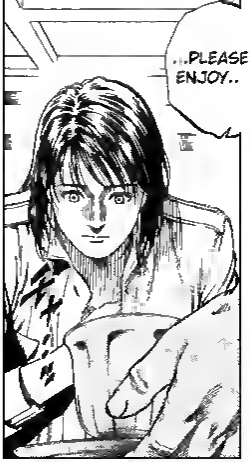

IF THAT'S THE CASE ...!?
HOPING, WISHING FOR THAT PERSON TO SAY "IT'S DELICIOUS!" CONCENTRATING ON YOUR PREPARATION, IF THAT'S THE CASE...
...

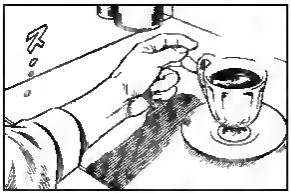
IF HE'S SO ENTHUSIASTIC, WHY DID HE SET HIS GOAL SO LOW?
FINE!! 50 POINTS... WHATEVER! I'LL SHOW THE GUY WHO SAID MY COFFEE SUCKS! MY NEXT GOAL IS 68 POINTS!
YOU MIGHT EARN 50 POINTS! (WITH YOUR CURRENT TECHNIQUE, THAT IS...)
10 EXTRA POINTS ...?
J-JUST

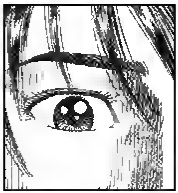
IT'S RARE FOR YOU TO COME ALONE AT THIS TIME
...
SHANIN...
Ding
I JUST... COULD USE A GOOD CUP OF COFFEE ...
DON'T KNOW WHY...
...
HUH?
HUH? WHO, ME?
YOU HAVE TO TRY HARD NOW. THE GOAL IS 100 POINTS!
!?
HEY!
SHAN-

Toc-poc
Toc-poc
Toc-poc
SFX COFFEE PERCOLATING
...
Toc-poc
...
KAORI-MAMA LOVES COFFEE...
WHY... DID I SUDDENLY WANT A DRINK OF COFFEE...?
WHEN KAORI-MAMA WAS FEELING DOWN...
SHE MUST HAVE USED COFFEE TO CALM HER FEELINGS...
SFX COFFEE PERCOLATING
STRANGE...
I'VE NEVER EVEN HAD COFFEE IN THE PAST...
コポ
BUT BECAUSE OF THE INFLUENCE OF MAMA'S MEMORIES... I'VE STARTED TO ENJOY IT...
ハッ!

THAT MY FEELINGS FOR NAT-SUME...
COULD IT BE POSSIBLE ...!?
ARE BECAUSE OF THE INFLUENCE OF KAORI-MAMA'S MEMORIES...!?
IS THAT IT...? KAORI-MAMA?
PLEASE TELL ME!
...
IT'S NOT
ooo
TRUE LOVE ...!?





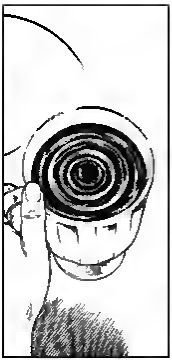


Ah-Shan...

SFX: GASP!
...!
Ah-Shan...
Your feelings of love... whether influenced by my feelings or not...
Even I'm not sure...
MAMA...!
But, Ah-Shan

You now know these feelings of adoration, anxiety and the sadness of love...
The person beside you who is in love... their moods and feelings should be very clear to you.

IS... IS IT NOT GOOD...?



KAORI-MAMA

HOW IS IT? DOES IT TASTE GOOD?
EH?

HE'S BEEN PRACTICING EVERY DAY SO SHANIN COULD HAVE A GOOD CUP OF COFFEE!
...
HA-HAYATO!
THAT CUP OF COFFEE WAS MADE BY SHIN-HON.
THIS...
WAS MADE BY SHIN-HON?
OH, EH... (KINDA MADE IT IN FRONT OF YOU...)
SO, UH, HOW DOES IT TASTE?
...
...

SU-
SUCCESS!!

EH...

IT'S VERY GOOD...

...
SHIN-HON...

THE PERSON BESIDE YOU...
THE MOOD AND FEELINGS OF THOSE IN LOVE...

...
WHAT'S GOING ON...?
HUH?
I'M SORRY...
THANK YOU... AND ALSO...
!!
SFX: SIP
IT'S NOTHING ...
HEH... 45 POINTS!
HEY, WHAT IS IT...?
NO...
GAH, SUCH A HEAD-ACHE! WHY IS HE SUCH A WEEPY DRUNK?
UWAH HA HA! I'M SO HAPPY, BUT SO DEPRESSED!
END OF VOLUME 9